



The Copy of a

LETTER,

FROM

Lientenant Colonell JOHN LILBURNE, to a Friend.

KIND FRIEND,

He many Ingagements I owe to you, ties me to give you an account according to your desire how things are with mee; Yesterday being Thursday, the 24. of this present July, I was commanded to attend upon the Committee of Examinations, which at the Inner Court of Wards I did; and after that the Committee of Common-Councell men, that use to sit at Salters Hall, was called in, and as I conceive, had given in their papers about Sir John Lenthalls business, &c. divers other Witnesses were called in, and amongst others, one Mistris Hanna Jencks going in, desired the Committee to cleere the roome of Mr Cole, the Speakers man, and that hee might be put out of doores, being an enemy to the things shee had to declare, and at her second time being called in, as soon as the doore was opened, shee spake; Gentlemen, I will not come unto you, till Mr Cole be put out of doore, for it is not faire, that my enemies should be present, and my friends kept out: So hee was commanded to withdraw, and when it came to my turne to be called in, which was long first, Mr Corbet being in the Chaire, our proceedings, so near as I can remember, were as followeth.

Lientenant Colonell Lilburne, I am commanded by the House to demand this Question of you; Whether did not you upon the 19 of this present July, being Saturday, at Westminster, say, That there were high and great things discovered concerning divers Members of the House of Commons, which reached as

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high

high as to the Speaker, who from his own hands had sent Three-score Thousand Pounds to the King to Oxford, unto which I replied; Sir, I am a Prisoner committed by the House of Commons, but I know not wherefore; I shall therefore humbly desire to know the cause of my Commitment, and then I shall answer you; unto which he said very angerly; Sir, the House is not bound to declare unto you the cause wherefore they commit you; unto which I said; Then truly I have been a long time mistaken, and so indeed I have; for had I thought that the Parliament had had no Rule but their owne will to have walked by, I should never have drawn my sword for them; and for my part, I know no difference betwixt Tyranny, and such proceedings; therefore I pray read the Petition of Right, and the Act made this present Parliament, that condemned the *Star-chamber* and *High Commission*.

Sir, saith Mr *Conbit*, wee expect from you a positive answer to the Question, and command you to give it: Well Sir, then to it I answer thus, I am a Free-man, yea, a free borne Denizen of *England*, and I have been in the field with my sword in my hand, to ventur my life and my blood (against Tyrants) for the preservation of my Freedome, and I do not know that ever I did an act in all my life that disfranchised me of my freedome, and by vertue of being a Free-man, I conceive I have as true a right to all the priviledges that doth belong to a Free-man, as the greatest man in *England*; whatsoever he be, whether Lord or Commoner, and the ground and foundation of my Freedome, I build upon the grand Charter of *England*, which is published and expressed in the 9. of *H. 3. cap. 1.* which I humbly crave leave to read unto this Honourable Committee, and having obtained leave, I read as followeth. *No Free-man may be taken and imprisoned, and diseised of his Freehold, or his Libertie, or his free Customs, or out-lawed; or banished, or any way destroyed; neither will wee goe upon him, neither passe upon him, but by the lawfull tryall of his equals, or by the Law of the Land; Justice and Right wee will sell to none, wee will denie to none, nor will deferre to none.* Sir, the Priviledges contained herein is my Birth-right and Inheritance, which Priviledges have been ratified and confirmed to the Free People of *England* this present Parliament, and many Declarations put out against the King for violating of them.

W. L. BURNE
ANE 406

Yet

Yet notwithstanding, since the first of *May* last, I have by Authority from the House of Commons, been three times Imprisoned before ever I knew mine accuser, or mine Accusation, or ever was suffered to speake one word in mine owne defence; which I humbly conceive, is contrary to *Magna Charta*, and those Priviledges that I ought to enjoy by vertue of my having an Interest therein; and now I am imprisoned by Vote of the whole House, I know not wherefore, therefore till it be made knowne unto me wherefore I am imprisoned, I shall not answer to any of your Interrogatories at all. Vnto which Mr *Corbie*, as also Mr *Whitaker* replied, Mr *Lilburne*, be advised in your expressions, and take heed what you say in this nature: *Gentlemen*, I humbly thanke you for your caution given me, but for your advice, I desire you to keep it to yourselves, for I conceive, I know well enough what I say, and truly that rough and hard dealing that I finde from the Parliament and their Officers, forceth me to expresse my selfe as I doe; for I beseech you, give me leave to tell you, that I was never so affronted and abused in my life amongst my freinds, as I was by your Sergeant at Armes, when he apprehended me, who at the going into the Hall, took me by my sword belt, and drag'd, and pull'd, and shooke me, giving me such language, as if I had been the arrantest Rogue and Rascall in the World, and when I was out of the Hall, where I civilly (understanding the nature of a Prisoner) disarmed my selfe, and was giving my sword into the hands of my friend, to carry home to my Wife, as my owne proper goods, he would needs by force and violence rob me of it, saying it was his, and he would have it, so that I was forced to fustle to preserve my selfe from being rob'd of my owne proper goods, and all this he did unto me, having no warrant at all about him, to meddle with me, nor I not offering the least affront in the world unto him.

Time was, he used your enemies, to my knowledge, ten times milder; for when Cap. *Hide* drew his sword in *Westminster* hall, of purpose to make an uproare there, whom I disarmed, and brought both him and his sword up to the House of Commons doore, and by command of divers Members, delivered them both to the Sergeant, yet immediately after, during the time of a Conference, hee let both him and his sword goe to his Comrades in

Westminster-Hall, who being no sooner there amongst them, but he occasioned almost a 100. of them to draw, and fall to slashing and cutting, having driven the naked people up the very Parliament staires, with a resolution (for any thing I could perceive) to cut all your throats in the House, for the preventing of which, Sir *Rich. Wisenton*, my selfe, and diverse other Citizens with our swords in our hands, freely adventured our lives.

Hereupon *M. Lile* stept up, and very soberly expressed himselfe to this effect; *Mr Corbet*, I desire to know whether or no *M^r Lilburne* intends by way of Petition to declare these expressions of his to the House? or whether he intends hereby some other way, as to cast an aspersion of injustice upon the whole House of Commons, and to shew his refractorines to answer to their Interrogatories? unto which I replied; Sir, for Petitioning the House, I have no intention to doe it about this businesse, having petitioned long enough to no purpose already in another case, and as for your other expressions, I humbly conceive my words are plaine, and he that reads them, may easily understand them, and if you can expresse them plainer then they are already written, and reach my sense and meaning, I shall willingly subscribe my hand to them, or if you please to give mee Penne, Inke and Paper, I shall write mine own words my selfe, and my name at the bottome of them, whereupon diverse of them wished me to take heed what I did: I told them, Gentlemen, I speake not the words of rashnesse, or inconsideratenesse, but of deliberation, having something pondered upon them before I came to you, neither doe I speak the words of lightnesse, as though I would say a thing this houre, and fall from it the next; but I speake that which I will stand to, and live and dye by, humbly submitting my body to your pleasure: so being commanded to withdraw, I said, Gentlemen, I humbly crave leave to make one desire more to you, which is, that you will be pleased to give me a copy of your Question, and mine own Answer, but it was denied: and so I withdrew.

Now what the issue of all this will be, the Lord knowes, for my part, I may justly say in the words of the Prophet *Esay*, chap. 59. 14 &c. *Therefore Judgement is turned backward, & Iustice standeth a farre off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter, yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evill, maketh him-*

himselfe a prey: but the Lord saw it, it displeased him, that there was no Iudgement, and when he saw that there was no man, he wondered, that none would offer himselfe, therefore his arme did save it, and his righteousnesse it selfe did sustaine it; for he put on righteousnesse as a breast-plate; and a helmet of Salvation upon his head, and he put on the garments of vengeance for cloathing, and was clad with zeale as a cloake, and will repay fury to his adversaries, and recompence to his enemies.

Time was when the Parliament had to doe with the King, and had the Bishops, Star-chamber, & High-Commission to pull down, they would owne me, and doe me justice, yea, so high in their thoughts was I once, that the very day and houre the King caused me to be arraigned for my life, before the whole House of Peeres about the Earle of Strafford, the King himselfe sending my Accusation against me, which was upon the 4. of May, 1641. Yet notwithstanding, the House of Commons owne me, and then made these Votes for me, First, that the Sentence of the Star-chamber given against me, is Illegall, and against the Liberty of the Subject, and also bloody, wicked, cruell, barbarous and tyrannicall. Secondly, that reparations ought to be given me for my Imprisonment, sufferings and losses sustained by that Illegall sentence.

But having served their owne turnes of me, I never could have Justice from them since, though I think I have been as faithfull a servant to the Common-weale as any they ever imployed, and bid defiance to all men in the World, to brand or taxe me with unfaithfulness; and whereas *Magna Charta* saith, Justice and right we will deny to none, nor we will deferre to none, yet have I awayted these foure years upon them, at great expences, and cannot get them to put their own Votes in execution, and if this be according to *Magna Charta*, let the World judge.

And now of late I have followed them above these 6 months, to the expence of about 100^l to get a Petition read, that I might have justice, and something of that which is mine owne, to pay my debts, and buy me and mine bread, and have made all the friends I could in the House, but as I conceive, I have been denied justice and Right; and two severall times have I been with the Speaker himselfe, at his own house, humbly to crave his assistance. But so lofty and high was he, that hee would not so much as

look upon me, or speake with me, though I waited upon him to his very Coach; And within two or three dayes after I had been with him, finding no compassion at all, Printed my Petition, and at the House of Commons doore delivered above 150 Copies thereof to the Members, as they went in; and yet for all that, could not get it read in the House; Whereupon, as one of my last hopes, I went downe to the Army upon Munday was a Moneth, (of purpose) to my honoured Friend, Lievtenant Generall Cromwell, who formerly had taken compassion on me in my bands, and under God, was the principall instrument to get me my liberty from my long Captivity by the Bishops, I say I went downe to him to get his Letter to some of the Members here, to desire them to help forward my businesse; which I accordingly procured, and have delivered the Originall, and Copies of it to divers Members of the House, a true Copy whereof I have sent you here enclosed, and I professe, the getting of this Letter was the end of my going downe to the Army, and my journey, going, staying, and comming, cost me about 10l. Divers of my friends of good qualirie there, desiring me to stay till they had some ingagement, that so I might be the joyfull Messenger of good tydings, to the Parliament, they conceiving thereby, that that would be a principall meanes to help forward my businesse that I was negotiating in the House, which was nothing but that I might have justice, and injoy the fullfilling of the Parliaments owne Votes and Ordinances.

Extraordinary hard I rode about 150 miles, the way I came in a strange Country, and amongst many hazards at my owne cost and charges, and brought up the first Letters that came from any fighting Officers that I could heare of, and gave the House a true and punctuall Relation of the businesse, according to what mine owne eyes saw, and at the desire of some of the Members, put it in writing, and afterwards in Print; and for my recompence, I enjoyed nothing but jeares, scoffes and abuses, and that eminently, but what the ground of all this should be, I know not, unlesse it be because I neither love a Slave, nor feare a Tyrant; and upon Friday next after my comming home, I came to Westminster (about my businesse, not so much as thinking of any thing they were debating of in the House, my thoughts being onely of my
Petition,

Petition, and honourable *Cromwells* Letter) where I met with one *Mr Robinson* accidentally, just as I came into the Hall about 12 a clock, who told me of a businesse, concerning *Colonell Hallis*, which I immediately communicated to *Mr Samuel Goose*, then standing hard by me, which hee, the said *Robinson* repeated over and over againe and againe, and Master *Goose* took notice of it, which we without any designe in the world (saving the discharge of our duty) made knowne to some Members of the House, which Relation that we made, *Mr Robinson* ownes, and saith he will justifie it to death, and for which he is since committed to *Ely* house.

The lyes and reproaches that are since cast upon me by divers great ones, forceth me to give you this short account of it; It is looked upon by some, as though I designed it in the Army. (and truly juglers of late have got a fine device to blinde the eyes of the World, by loading honest men with Reproaches, as hee is an Independent, and therefore nothing must be given care unto that he saith, though never so true,) but I protest before the presence of the God of heaven and earth, I had not one word of discourse upon it in the Army; others say, that I hired *Mr Robinson* to it, which is the most notorious lye in the World, and which practise is so detestable to me, that I wish with all my soule, that all the practisers of such basenesse were hanged, (it maybe the rayfers of such a lye, are versed in such god-lesse like wayes, and therefore take the boldnesse to square other men by their owne rule,) for all that I said to *Mr Goose* was this, after we had been with *Mr Robinson* at the Dogg-Taverne, to drinke a pint of Wine, I spake to *Mr Goose* to this effect; that *Mr Robinson* had been employed by my Lord Generall *Essex*, Alderman *Pennington*, and others, as an Intelligencer in the Kings Quarters, and did my selfe, and other Prisoners in *Oxford* good service in our straights, by sending our Letters to *London* for us, &c. and I beleevd hee was now in the condition of many others (that have done the Parliament good service) very poore, and if *Mr Goose* would be an Instrument to helpe him to any employment about the Excise, whereby he might get a subsistence, I told him it would be added of Charity to a man in want, as I conceived him to be, and if this be to hire *Robinson*, who had declared his Relation before ever I spake a word of this to Master *Goose*, I leave every rational

tionall man to judge; nay, I averre this for truth, that *Mr Robinson* was so forward to declare it, both now and formerly unto me, without my speaking or desiring, or the promising of any courtesie in the world for the doing of it; and I doe verily beleevē, he is a man that in his soule hates such basenesse.

Vpon Saturday, the 19. of *July*, I came againe to the Parliament, which morning there came three Citizens downe from *London*, namely *Mr Trist* a Draper, and one of his Neighbours in *Dowgate*, and one *Mr Worly*, that lives about *Moore-fields*, to *Westminster*, and for my part, I neither knew their businesse, nor intentions, for they were a giving in their informations before Foure Members of the House of Commons, namely *Col. Rigby*, *Sir Walter Earle*, *Col. Long*, and *Mr Corbet*, before I knew what they were about, though I confesse, I have often in *London* heard of such a businesse concerning *Sir John Lenthall* and the Speaker, &c. as they were giving information of, which was known to thousands of Citizens by the hearing of the care, and I confesse, when I heard *Mr William Pendred* speake first of them, hee spake so freely of them, being of so great concernment, that I professe I was afraid to heare any more; yet it seems *D^r Bastwick*, (a man that stands obliged to me with as many tyes of friendship and respect, as I am confident he doth to any man in the world, for whom I have often, both in *England* and *Holland*, adventured my life, and all that was mine, and for whose sake and cause, as an earthly instrument, I underwent all the sorrowes and miseries that I suffered from the Bishops, for divers yeares together,) sent in a paper to the Speaker, to informe him, that I had accused him for sending 6000*l* to *Oxford*, though with the said *D^r Bastwick*, (to my remembrance,) I had not any discourse at all about any such businesse, for the discourse I had about that businesse, was with Lieutenant *Col. Roe*, the Scout Master Generall of the City, whom I brought up out of the Garden, to the aforesaid three Citizens, that had newly given in their information under their owne hands: *Mr Worly*, one of the three, being Lieutenant *Col. Roes* old acquaintance, told him more then, (I am confident of it,) by many degrees, then before he had from me; yet, (as I am informed,) upon *D^r Bastwicks* paper barely, the Speaker got a Vote (before I ever knew any thing, though I all day waited upon the Parliament) to passe the House in these words

Die Sabbati 19. Iuly, 1645.

Resolved upon the Question by the Commons assembled in Parliament, that Lieutenant Colonell Lilburne be forthwith taken into custody by the Sergeant at Armes attending this House, and so kept till the House take further order.

To the Sergeant of Arms attending
on this house, or to his deputy, &c. } *H. Elsing.* Cler. Parl. de Com.

By meanes of which Vote, I am committed to Prison, before ever I was heard to speake, though all day, at (or within call of) the doore, and though a man in all my actions firme for the Common wealth, yet committed I know not wherefore, which is contrary (as I conceive) to the true intent of *Magna Charta*, and to that just practice that was amongst the very Heathen Roman Governours, who say, *Acts* 25. 27. that it seemeth unreasonable, to send a Prisoner, and not withall to signifie the Crimes laid against him: by meanes of which I am ingaged, whether I will or no, in a businesse which I had no finger in, the prosecuting whereof (as I conceive) I am now tied to have an eye to, but I thinke that at the conclusion of it, if the Speaker sit downe and reckon the gaines he will get by his so unwisely meddling with me, and so unwarrantably committing me to prison, he will not be three-halfe-pence the richer for it, for I am confident that God will make good what he hath said, which is, that he will punish the world for their evill, and the wicked for their iniquity, and he will cause the Arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtinesse of the terrible, for behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruell both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the Land of wickednesse desolate: and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it, *Isai.* 13. and as the same Prophet saith, Chap. 26. for although favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learne righteousness: in the land of uprightnesse will he deale unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord. Yea saith the Prophet, though the hand of the Lord be lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people, yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devoure them: but as for those that walk uprightly, he saith, The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poore amongst men shall rejoyce in the holy One of Israel; and one reason is, because the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity shall be cut off;

whose practice it is to make a man an offender for a word, and to lay snares for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught, Isa. 29. 19, 20, 21. I intreat you to read what God saith of such men in the next chapter, from verse 9. to 15.

For my part, though I heare bayle will not be taken for me, so great is my crime, though yet I know it not, nor am not convicted of any, and though I heare that my person is so odious in the eyes of many great ones, that some of them, thought there was ground for committing Col. Russel, and Col. Ireton, &c. for talking with me in the Court of Requests upon Saturday last, although they were not able to mention one word that wee said; oh, but my businesse was an independent Plot, and they were talking with me, and that was crime enough for them to be committed, O brave times! and brave Justice! and yet for all this I say, my resolution is to stand fast in the Liberty and freedom where-with *Magna Charta*, and the *Petition of Right*, and severall Acts made this present Parliament, as also divers late Declarations hath made me free, and not to be intangled againe with any yoke of Bondage, that shall be hung about my neck, by any kinde of Tyrant, by what name or Title soever he be dignified or distinguished; and though men be never so great, mighty and Potent, that shall set themselves against me, to destroy me, contrary to Law, Equity, Justice and Conscience, I shall not feare ten thousand of them, put them altogether; because my confidence and hope is in him, that hath said to all those that are his, *Feare thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my Righteousnesse. Behold all they that were incensed against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seeke them, and shalt not finde them; even them that contended with thee; they that warre against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, feare not, I will helpe thee. Feare thou not, thou worne Jacob, and yee men of Israel, I will helpe thee saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel. Behold I will make thee a new sharpe threshing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountaines, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaffe? Thou shalt fan them, and the winde shall carry them away, & the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt re-joyce,*

joyce in the Lord, & glory in the holy One of Israel. Isa. 41. v. 10. to 16.

Deare Friend, I never thought before now, to have had the cause (with sorrow & grief) from the Parliamēt, to have expressed my self in such sad and complaining lines, considering my thoughts have been so high of them, that if I had had ten thousand lives at the beginning of this War, I should have ventured them all for them, yea, if it had been to have stript my self to my shirt, though I had not left my wife and family, wherewith to have subsisted one houre, because they began and went on so gallantly in such an impartiall way of Iustice, but now methinks, I am at a stand, seeing the streame is turned, and for my part, I may cry out with sadnesse of Spirit, it runs with a full current. About 4. yeares agoe, they voted me to have reparations for all my sufferings, with the estates of all my enemies in their hands by sequestrations, saving some that sit in both Houses, and one or two that are at their homes by their protection, and yet I cannot get a penny; an Ordinance or Declaration they made at the beginning of these Warrs, that what person soever should loose any of their estates for their reall affection to the Parliament, they promise to make them reparations; In their service had I been, and like a man of resolution, adventured my life before I was carried prisoner to *Oxford*, where for almost a year, I with full courage and resolution, contemn'd no small proffers of worldly honour and glory, comming from the King himself, by the hands of 4. severall Lords, and underwent as many sorrows I think as was almost possible for one man to doe, lying sick amongst other miseries 4 or 5. dayes speechlesse, in the mean time being ruined in my estate to the value of 6. or 700^l. that I left behind me at *London*, which I can clearly make appear, but not a penny recompence have I had to this day.

After my deliverance, I served under my L. of *Manchester*, where, and with whom I adventured my life as freely as any man in the Army, and the best requitall that I got at his hand, was an earnest endeavour by him to hang me, for taking *Tickell* Castle from the Cavaliers, of all whose proceedings towards me in that particular, I divers moneths agoe gave punctuall information under my hand to Mr. *Lile*, that was Chayreman for the businesse betwixt him and Lieutenant Generall; but I can heare nothing of it, unlesse it be notched upon the Tally, to pay me with an unwelcome & undeserved requitall, & though plunderers, fals musterers, lewd and deboyft persons had their pay very well by him, yet into my debt he and the State doe still run,

that while I was under his command about 700^l and for any thing I can perceive, am likely to be paid at *Doomes-day* in the afternoone, though the Association (as I have bin informed) made very good payment to him, and besides all this, Mr *Prinne* writ books, and the Parliament licensed them, wherein he presseth to have all those destroyed and cut in pieces which he styles Independants, &c. for all the good services they had done the Kingdom, and poor I, being almost overwhelmed in my spirit at the perusal of them, knowing my own integrity and uprightnesse (as also all the rest of those he defames) towards our native Country, though I had been silent from the beginning of the Parliament to this very day, and had not in Print medled or made with the Controversies of the Church (as they call them) & then by his unsufferable slanders, wicked, bloody & un-English-man like provocations, having written book upon book against me and my harmlesse brethren, tending causelessly to our utter ruine and destruction.

For preventing of which, I writ to him an Epistle in one sheet of Paper, which I sent to him by the hands of one *Ralph Walton*, who delivered it into his own hands, the very night I sent it, which was three or foure daies before it was Printed, as not long since I declared to his face before the Committee of examinations, and offered to prove it also, yet he both then and since in his late *Firebrand-booke*, p. 34. most lyingly, just *William Prinne* like, affirms, That it was sent to the Presse, and published in Print before either he read it, or perused it, which is most false: for as I told the Committee, I having sent it him in writing, as before he remaining silent, and returned me no answer in three or foure daies, according to my earnest desire, his very silence moved me to Print it; & of this very false affirmation he was then ashamed, & durst not goe on to bide the prooffe of it, but put it off with one of his Scholasticall tricks, and also before the Committee at this very time to his face, I challenged him hand to hand, to dispute upon any one Proposition he would pitch upon in the whole Letter, & referre my self to the Committee themselves to be Judges, and would stand to their judgement, but the Paltry *Simpleton* declined it, and durst not joyne issue, and yet of late, in his *Gunpowder-booke*, railes and reviles me for that very Letter, as that nothing would quench his inflamed fiery thirst, but my dearest blood?

And about this very businesse, it seems he was the man that got Justice *Whittiker* to commit me to custody about the 14. of May, before

fore that either I knew my accuser, or my accusation, or was heard to speak one word for my selfe, though the Order of the House (by vertue of which that Committee examined me about that businesse) was only to summon me; & upon Tuesday I gave in my defence in a whole sheet of paper, under my owne hand, according to the Committees own direction, which was so satisfactory to them, that they bade me goe home about my businesse, and if Mr *Prin* should never call upon it againe, I was discharged, which so far as I can judge, he never durst doe; and then comes out Dr *Bastwick*s fire and gun-powder, touch'd with *Wil. Prin*s match-book, in the Preface of one of which he tells us, *that it is the daily discourse of the Independants, &c. That they have the sword now in their hands, and they scorn to be beholden to the Parliament for their liberty of conscience. for they will have it whether they will or no, with their swords and that they long for nothing so much, as for the outting of all the Presbyterians throats;* with abundance of such like expressions, of very dangerous consequence, therefore I would Dr *Bastwick* would name the men, that have so said, and produce his witnesses, and let them come to a speedy tryall, that they may receive their due deserts for their pains, or else that Dr *Bastwick* may receive it for them, for scandalizing of them; I think it is very strange, that the Parliament should suffer none but such books to come out by their owne Authority, and not to cause the Author to produce the speakers or movers of such Seditious, but suffer them *Cum Privilegio*, in generall termes to come abroad, and then punish innocent men, for their just vindicating their reputations.

Truly, if this be just, I have lost my judgement, and must begin to learne *A.B.C.* againe, this I say made me, to publish my reasons containing my just defence in Print, which I had given in to the Committee of Examinations, May 17. 1645. against which, if *Wil. Prin* can take any just advantage, me thinks, if he were but a rational man (being so great & dear to authority, as he boasts himselfe to be) he would not do as he doth, raile *Rabshekah* like, but have made his Reply to it before the Committee, where I am yet ready about that businesse, or any other he can justly lay to my charge, to meet him there; but he letting that sleep as he doth, makes me believe, that he judgeth it a true opener of his base unworthines, which he is not willing to have ript more open, therefore he passeth by that, & within a little space, (as was certified after) I was again imprisoned, he informing that I was the Author of *MARTIN*'S books, and then Justice *Whittiker* sends another war-

rant to imprison me before ever I knew mine accuser, or my accusation, or ever was heard or suffer'd to speak in mine own defence, & when I came before the Committee, to know what they had to say to me, I was commanded to withdraw, and my adversary *Prinne* hee stayes within, as usually he doth at all other times, which in my apprehension is not faire nor equall, the meanest man in the Kingdom that is a Free-man, having as great an interest in the priviledges of a free-man, as *Wil. Prinne* hath; and in againe I was called, and told I must waite againe to morrow, I expressed my selfe againe and againe unto them, to give me leave to declare but one thing to them, but heard I could not be, till about two houres after, waiting at the door, bemoaning and crying out to those that stood by, of the sad and dep'orable condition, that I and the rest of the free people in *England* are fallen into, to be so unjustly imprisoned, for the expence of our bloud for the just preservation of our just freedoms, that we should from Committees of Parliament themselves be imprisoned we know not wherefore, and when we come before them, according to their own commands, that we shall be remanded back againe, and not suffered to speak one word for our selves; *Hear O heavens, and give eare, O earth, and thou righteous God that lovest justice, and judgement, and hatest and abhorrest oppression & cruelty, which makest wisemen mad, put forth thy hand, and doe justice thy selfe upon the unjust and unrighteous Judges of this age, whom the people have set up for their good, namely to preserve their Lives, Liberties and Estates, as their faithfull Stewards & servants, and yet destroy what they would seem to maintaine.*

For my part, I look upon the House of Commons, as the supream Power of *England*, who have residing in them that power that is inherent in the people, who yet are not to act according to their owne wills and pleasure, but according to the fundamentall constitutions, and Customes of the Land, which I conceive provides for the safety and preservation of the People, unto whom I judge I am bound in Conscience to yeeld either active or passive obedience, that is to say, either to doe what they command, or to submit my body to their pleasure, for not yeelding active obedience to what I conceive is unjust. And truly, I should much desire to know of you, what you conceive of the Committee of Examinations; For either it is a Court of Justice, or no Court of Justice, and either it is tyed unto Rules, or not tyed; but if it be a Court of Justice, and tyed unto Rules, when it sits upon criminall causes betwixt man and man, concerning life, liberty or Estate,

Estate, of all which 3. they there take cognizance. Methinks they should observe the method of other Courts of Iustice, and that which they themselves did in all or most of their Committees at the beginning of this Parliament, that the doores might be open to all the free people of *England*, that have a desire to be present to see what they do or say, not kept close to keep out mens friends, and suffer their enemies to be in, and that men should have the Liberty of *Magna Carta*, and the *Petition of Right*, for which I have fought for all this while, and not be examined upon Interrogatories concerning our selves, as we used to be in the *Star-Chamber*, and *High Commission*, and for refusing to answer, to be committed.

For my particular, I was condemned in the *Star-Chamber* merely for refusing to be examined upon Interrogatories, in the very same nature as now I am by the Parliament; then I knew very well, that by the very law of nature, I was not bound to betray my self; and the House of Commons, *May 4. 1641.* have Voted since, that that very Sentence was *illegal, and unjust, and against the Liberty of the Subject*, and yet now walke in the very same steps themselves, and build up againe that, which by that Vote they formerly destroyed. I beseech you marke it, for they remanded me the other day back to Prison, for refusing to answer to their Interrogatories, & have done the same with diverse others, as namely, *John Turner* for one, now Prisoner in *Westminster* he knows not for what, & so hath been about 36 weeks. I protest, I speak from my very Soule and Conscience; I am in such a strait and snare, I know not well what to say or doe, I would not for all the world, cost it me hanging, drawing, burning, cutting in pieces, or what ever can be done unto me, sinne against my owne Conscience, in basely and cowardly betraying my Liberty, & the liberty of this free Nation, for which I have contested these 8. yeares, against all the unjust & Arbitrary Powers in *England*, neither would I willingly contest with the Parliament, if with the Peace of a good Conscience I could any wayes tell how to avoyd it; I conceive, when they have private things concerning the discoveries of Treasons against the State and the like, to be examined, there is a great deale of Reason it should not have so large an extent as the foresaid cause; I pray let me speedily enjoy your most serious thoughts about it in writing, which I shall take as a great favour and kindnesse.

Vpon the thoughts of these things the other day, when the Sergeant at Armes came to proffer me some kindnesse, for which I told him I would thank him when I enjoyed them, from him which I never yet
did

did in my life, and after much talke with him, I began in my owne thoughts to ponder and consider with my selfe, what was the reason and ground that made my Lord *Say*, and honest Colonell *Hambden* wage Law with the King in the dayes of old, I presently answered my selfe, it was because the King walked contrary to *Magna Charta*, and the *Petition of Right*, and oppressed them contrary to the true intent and meaning thereof, the consideration of which moved me amongst divers other things, to aske him this question; Mr Sergeant, I pray tell me, what was the reason wherefore the *Earle of Strafford* and *Canterbury* lost their heads? Saith he, I doe not know; well then Sir, if you doe not know, I will tell you, that it was because they trod *Magna Charta* (which I read unto him) under their feet, & endeavoured to rule by their own wills, & so to set up an arbitrary Government; therefore, Sir, I beseech you, doe your Mr, the *Speaker*, that favour, as present my service to him, and tell him, that I desire him and the rest of his friends, to take heed they doe not walke in their steps, if they doe, tell him I say, they are as accountable for their actions & doings, although being members of the house of Commons, as the other were who were Members of the House of Peers; and truly Mr Sergeant, tell him I wonder with what face he & the rest can deny me Justice, and so long keep me from my money, who have adventured my Life, Estate, and all that is deare unto me for the good of them, and the Common-wealth, that they might sit in peace and quietnesse at home to doe justice and right according to the duty of their places, and that that is expected from them by those that intrusted them to be their Stewards and servants; and many of them take to themselves 3^l. 10^s. a week, and some of them more, and others great Places worth 500^l, 1000^l, 1500^l, 2000^l. and more *per annum*, and live in as great pompe, superfluity and bravery, as ever they did in their daies, by the ruines of the people, when thousands, that have spent all they have in the world, and done the Kingdom good service, have not a bit of bread to put in their mouths, but what they borrow mony to buy withall, and many poor Widdows & Fatherlesse children, that have lost their husbands & fathers in the publick service, by crying at their door, Bread, Bread, and ready to curse them all to their faces, and they have no bowells of compassion towards them. O Sir, tell them from me, I say, the cry of the Widdow and Fatherlesse, the poor and needy, the oppressed, and the afflicted, will cry lowd in the eares of the Lord of Hosts against them and theirs, for judgement and vengeance.

When I seriously consider the multitudes of those oppressions, in the

the City of *London*, and all the Countreyes in the Kingdome, that lye upon the poor Common People, who are as a prey to all sorts and kinds of men, that are in Authority and Office, and have none to complaine to, to have redresse from, great ones being so linked together, that meddle with one, and presently they all ingage in it, and instead of a just redresse, endeavour to crush by Power and greatnesse the honest and wronged complainer, and by tricks to blast his reputation; and when I seriously consider the many windings and turnings, in that Army where I last served, and others of the like nature elsewhere, which to my selfe I have made observations upon, I am ready to think with my selfe, that when the King went away from *London*, he took not all his friends away with him, but left some behind him here, to play his game for him, namely to weary out, and to oppress and tyre the people, (that so they may long for peace upon any termes in the World, though never so unjust and unsafe,) that he may in an undiscerned way, effect that by policy, which before the Warres he was not able by Power to accomplish, namely, to set himselfe downe in the full state of a Tyrant, to rule by his own will, over the Lives, Liberties and Estates of the free People of *England*, who now contending for their Liberties, which is their birth-right and inherirance, yet amongst those that would be thought their friends, are rob'd, plundered, spoyled, oppressed, undone, and destroyed by all sides, and no remedy left for redresse, but the little ones to be eaten up of the great ones in every place, which makes poor mens lives a burthen to them, that they are ready to wish themselves back againe in *Egypt*, in their bondage, and rather to have one Tyrant then many, the which if the King could accomplish, he had done his worke, for then hee might put his foot into the stirrop, and get up into the saddle againe, without any feare of being dismounted, and might fall afresh to switching and spurring the poore tyred horse, by Courts as bad as Councell-Table, Star-chamber, or High-Commission, thereby, and by Monopolies and other wayes as bad as ship-mony, make him sweat out his grease; and alas! the poor horse is so tyred out, that he hath not any ability at all left to throw off his rider, though he abuse him never so much, having already been so rarrased (even by those that would have been judged his friends,) that he hath lost his courage, his strength, his stomach, and his leggs, being thereby so farre from being able to dismount his rider, that he is scarce able to goe a foot-mans pace; Oh for Justice! Justice betwixt a man and his neighbour, impartially, without respect of persons, which alone under God is the only cure of all *Englands* maladies, and without which the free People of this Kingdom are insensibly destroyed and undone irrecoverably.

Vpon the writing of this, I have brought to my view *William Prinnes* new blazing *Fire-brand* book, and casting mine eye upon it, I cannot but wonder

at the simplicitie of the besotted man, who formerly was so mad at *Young Martin's* books, that he endeavoured to get every body to prison that meddled or made with them, and endeavoured by all wayes and meanes to have them suppressed, yet now he himselfe publisheth all the chiefe things in all his books, to the view of thousands that durst not meddle with them before, and yet now in his book may read them all in their Shops or houses, and make themselves merry with them by *Wil. Prinnes* meanes, *cam privilegio*; surely the man is out of his wits, God having made good that in *Esay*, 29. 14. upon him, where he saith, that he *will make the wisdom of wisemen to perish, and the understanding of the prudent to be hid*; surely he hath done his masters that set him at work more disservice by this one book, then ever he did them good by all the books that ever he writ for them; For in his Epistle to the Parliament, he keeps a mighty rayling against his Adversaries (just *Rabshakeh-like*) crying, and calling for Justice against them, yea, closely taxing the Parliament for not doing justice upon them, for abusing of them by their books, which comes but out by stealth in holes and corners, without publick licence, and yet he himself in this his one book (which I conceive is put out by Parliamentary Authoritie,) most grossly abuseth the Parliament, and the Free People of *England*, and gives the greatest advantage to his Antagonists, that possible can be given; amongst other things, I will instance that businesse of Sir *Sam. Luke*, who hath complained to the Committee of Examinations of Captain *Paul Hobson*, and Cap. *Richard Beaumont*, the businesse having only proceeded thus far, that Sir *Sam. Lukes* witnesses are examined, and as the Defendants tell me, the maine things he layes to their charge, is only proved by one witnesse (who they say, is as base and vild as a man can be) and contradicted by 4. or 5. of Sir *Samuel Lukes* owne witnesses, and not one of the Defendants witnesses so much as examined, though indeed the Committee hath sent for them, and the Defendants tell me, upon the Examination of them, they doe not doubt but evidently, and cleerly to make it appeare, that the grand things laid to their charge, are meere forgeries and untruths, the substance of which you may read in the 4, 5, and 6. pag. of *Prinnes* Epistle to the Parliament, and in the 13. page of his book; now I say, for *Will. Prin* the Lawyer, but rather the *Grand Lyar* (that would be thought one of the wisest men in the world, though indeed he be one of the arrantest Fooles and Idiots) to take upon him, during the very time that a businesse is dependant before a Committee of Parliament (in which his book, he involves so many Persons of eminency, quality, and approved fidelity in the Kingdom) and before the businesse be one halfe heard, or any part of the Defendants defence made, or any one of their witnesses examined, the Defendants themselves stily averring that the main things charged upon them are notorious lyes, forgeries and falsehoods, which they will undertake

dertake with the hazard of the losse of their lives cleerly to make appeare,
 now for *Will. Prinne* to take upon him to meddle with a busines depending
 before a Committee of Parliament, before they have either judg'd it, or half
 heard it, to passe sentence upon it, and condemne the parties, yea, to lash
 at the Parliament, for not doing justice upon them, before they have con-
 demn'd them, and to publish this to the view of the world, with abundance
 of lyes and slanders, not only against the parties themselves, but also against
 Honourable Sir *Tho. Fairfax*, and honourable *Cromwell*, and divers other
 chiefe Officers in the Army, to whom the whole Kingdom owes so many
 Obligations of Honour and respect unto for all their faithfulness and good
 service done them, is so insufferable, unwarrantable, unjust, and abusive, as I
 think was never done by any to the Parliament since they sate besides Mr
Prinne, and I am confident, if I should have done as much as he hath in that
 book, and have been such a *Fire-brand* as there he is, I should hardly escape
Tyburn; for whereas he chargeth the Defendants for saying, that Sir *Thomas*
Fairfax, and all the Colonells in the Army, was engaged in their designe (by
 which words he endeavours to make the Army odious to the people; and
 so fit to be deserted by them, though their actions have fully declared (for all
 Mr *Prinnes*, and Dr *Bastwicks* lyes and slanders) their faithfulness and can-
 dor to the Common-wealth,) who, I am confident, are so upright and no-
 ble, that they would count it their greatest dishonour to countenance the
 greatest Colonell in the Army in any act of baseness whatsoever; and for
 the truth of that charge, the Defendants relate it thus to me, That Sir *Sam-*
uel sent them prisoners to Sir *Thomas*, for meeting together the day after
 Sir *Tho.* his Victory at *Nasby*, where they were a giving thanks to God for
 his goodness towards the Kingdom in generall, and his servants and people
 in particular by that Victory, and being conducted prisoners by Sir *Samuel*
Marshall, and one of his Ensignes, with others, they did abuse the two Cap-
 tains as they went, and upon their complaint of it to Sir *Thomas*, and his
 Councell of War, who examined it, the honourable Generall signified it in a
 Letter to Sir *Samuel*, desiring him to vindicate his own Honour so far, as to
 cashier the Marshall and Ensigne, and upon the Captains arrivall at *New-*
port back againe, they were told, That seeing Sir *Thomas* would not doe Ju-
 stice, Sir *Sam.* would send them up to the Parliament, where he would have
 justice, unto which one of the Captaines replied, Well, I will meddle no
 more in the businesse, for now Sir *Thomas* and his Colonells are engaged in
 it, at which one would catch advantage; whereupon Cap. *Hobson* immediat-
 ly desired the people then present, to take notice he did not say nor meane,
 that they were engaged to justify them in their preaching, but being at *New-*
port taxed for injustice, their honours laid a stake, which they were engaged
 to vindicate, and this would be proved to be reall truth sufficiently, I can-

not proceed for want of time any further with *Will. Prinnes* lies & fooleries, but must referre them to another time, for a more particular answer to him, wherein I doubt not but to take off his great bragges of his superlative service that he hath done for the Kingdom, and shall Anatomise his destructive practises to the Common-wealth, in supporting *St. phil. Cartwright* the malignant Governor of *Gersey*, who by his means alone hath been as great an instrument of the support to the King in his unjust warres, as any hath been in *Eng.* I shall likewise make it appear, that he hath been a Protector of those that have betrayed the strong holds of the Parl. into the hands of the Caviliers, and a pleader of all malignant Priests causes, & others that would fee him well, and the pleader of Parents in point of Law, and Iudges practises as binding to the people, though against expresse acts of Parl. and this he hath done lately before Committees of Parl. the doing of which tends to the destroying of *Magna Charta*, and the *Pet. of Right*, the overthrowers or destroyers thereof being Traytors to the Common-wealth: but I shall not further proceed at present, but commit you to God, & rest, Your faithfull friend till Death, *Jo. Lilburne*. From my Captivity, I know not wherefore, at *M. Knights*, Attendant to the House of Com. Friday, July 25. 1645.

Here followeth a true Copy of Lieutenant Generall *Cromwells* Letter.

Gentlemen, Being at this distance from Lon. I am forced to trouble you in a business, which I would have don my selfe, had I bin there; it is for *Lie. Col. Lilburne*, who hath done both you and the Kingdom good service, otherwise I should not have made use of such friends, as you are: he hath a long time attended the House of Com. with a Petition, that he might have reparation according to their Votes, for his former sufferings & losses, and some satisfaction for his Arrears for his service of the State, which hath been a long time due unto him; To this day he cannot get his Petition read, his attendance hath proved very expensive, and hath kept him from other imployment, & I believe that his former losses & late services (which have bin very chargeable considered; he doth find it a hard thing in these times, for himself & his family to subsist; Truly it is a grief to see men ruine themselves through their affection & faithfulness to the Publick, & so few lay it to heart: It would be an honor to the Par. & an encouragement to those that faithfully serve the (if provisions were made for the comfortable subsistence of those who have lost all for the) and I can assure you, that this neglect of those that sincerely serve you, hath made some already quit their Commands in this Army, who have observed oftentimes their wives & children have beg'd, who have lost their limbs & lives in the Kingdoms service: I wish it were looked to be times, That which I have to request of you is, that you give him your assistance to get his Petition read in the House, & that you will do him all lawfull favour & justice in it, I know he will not be unthankfull, but adventure himselfe as freely in the service of the Kingdom, as hitherto he hath done. Hereby you shall lay a speciall Obligation upon your servant, *Oliver Cromwell*. July the 10. 1645.